

Morocco Liberal candidate

To be confirmed
at nomination
meeting

2



Group goes to bat for Parliament Oak

Declining enrolment
a myth, parents say

12

'Gutsy effort' by Wallbangers

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Santa comes to town



PENNY COLES Niagara Advance

Santa Claus arrived on Queen St. Saturday, wrapping up the annual NOTL Christmas Parade. Attendance was down a little because of the stormy weather, but the crowd was appreciative of the popular event. See pages 4 and 5 for more photos.

Farmer's markets to sell VQA

➤ Premier announces
renewed wine and
grape strategy

Don Fraser
QMI Agency

Ontario VQA wines will soon be sold at farmers' markets as part of a new \$75-million provincial Wine and Grape Strategy.

Premier Kathleen Wynne made the announcement Monday after a tour of Niagara College's Wine Visitor and Education Centre.

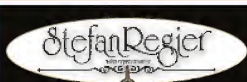
In addition to allowing wine made entirely from Ontario-grown grapes in those markets, the program kicks off an Ontario Wine Fund to boost winery and vineyard investments.

It also creates a "Wine Secretariat" to help the province and industry find ways to make the industry more competitive.

The five-year strategy renews an original program launched in 2009 to strengthen the industry.

"We're going to work with you on a program to sell wine at Ontario farmers' markets," Wynne said at the Niagara-on-the-Lake campus event.

See Page 2



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Niagara Real Estate Centre Inc., Brokerage

Falls councillor announced as preferred candidate

Joyce Morocco must be confirmed at nomination meeting

Matt Day and Ray Spiteri
QMI Agency Niagara

Joyce Morocco is the preferred Liberal candidate for the upcoming by-election.

"I need Joyce on my team at Queen's Park," Premier Kathleen Wynne said at a press conference held at the McCain Community Centre Monday.

"Her commitment to building her local economy will make her an important

advocate for the people of Niagara Falls. We need her energy and ideas at Queen's Park to build on Niagara's proud history of success."

Morocco, 56, sits on council for the city of Niagara Falls, and is the president of Destination Niagara.

"During the upcoming campaign, I will be talking about helping people in the Niagara region," Morocco said. "For me, it's about investing in our businesses and creating jobs. It's about giving our youth a reason to stay here, raise their families, and build careers right here at home."

The incumbent party during a scheduled by-election date since Sept. 24 when long-time MPP Kim Craitor stepped down.

A by-election must be called within six months of a seat being vacated, which in this case would be by March. No date has been announced yet.

While the Liberal association has selected Morocco as its preferred candidate, a nomination meeting still has to be held.

Niagara Falls Provincial Liberal Association President Karen Gansel said a date for the nomination has not been set but it would not be over the holidays.

Morocco was first elected to city council in 2003. She was defeated in 2006 but made a political comeback in the 2010 election.

In 2008 she received 13,000 votes as the Liberal candidate in the federal election, losing to incumbent MP Rob Nicholson

who earned 24,000 votes.

She is married to John Morocco, a superintendent with the city of Niagara Falls. They have two daughters, Lisa and Karlie.

Elections Ontario has secured an office at Niagara Square in preparation for the by-election.

The Progressive Conservatives have named Regional Coun. Bart Maves as their candidate.

The NDP represented during the 2011 election by former Fort Erie Mayor Wayne Redekop, has not yet set a date for a nomination meeting to pick a candidate.

The Niagara Falls riding covers Niagara Falls, Niagara-on-the-Lake and Fort Erie.



Niagara Falls Coun. Joyce Morocco is the preferred candidate to run in the by-election that will replace former MPP Kim Craitor, Premier Kathleen Wynne announced Monday at the McCain Centre in Niagara Falls. Photo from QMI Agency

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'Devil in the details' says Grape Grower CEO

From Page 1

"And we'll look at how we can make that work in an economically and socially responsible way."

"That translates into jobs and economic activity that benefits all of Ontario," Wynne said. "We'll work together to get more people across the province and around the world to choose Ontario wines. I think we can set our sights higher and take our industry to the next level."

She said Ontario's growing

grape and wine industry is earning an international reputation for excellence.

"Your success has helped establish the Niagara peninsula (and other wine-growing areas in the province) as prime tourist destinations."

"That translates into jobs and economic activity that benefits all of Ontario," she said, of an industry that poured about \$3.3 billion into the province's economy in 2011 alone.

VQA wine sales in Ontario have jumped by \$100 million annually

since 2008, to an estimated \$268 million this year.

Discussions with wine stakeholders about adding VQA to farmers' markets in the province will likely begin in the new year. Fruit wines can already be sold at those venues.

In interviews after Wynne's announcement, industry provincial leaders praised the strategy's continuation, and expansion of wine sales into new markets.

"This is great and is something that's a continuation of a program we've had for a number of years,"

said Allan Schmidt, chair of the Wine Council of Ontario. "To have had it not renewed would have been a big challenge."

"It means we can be a lot more competitive in the LCBO against imports."

Debbie Zimmerman, CEO of the Grape Growers of Ontario, said the "devil is in the details," in an interview afterward.

"But it means money for both the grape growers and wine industry, and \$75 million over the next five years is terrific news for all of us."

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Driver jumps Homer Bridge, bitten by police dog as he tries to escape

Truck had been stolen in November

Grant LaFleche
QMI Agency Niagara

If you ever wondered what the Duke of Hazard would look like in real life, all you had to do was watch the Homer Bridge Saturday morning.

That was when a white Chevy Silverado pickup truck — playing the role of the General Lee — crashed through a safety gate and jumped over the gap as the bridge opened over the Welland Canal.

But unlike the General Lee which landed gracefully after such a dramatic leap, the truck slammed into the other side of the bridge, smashing its front end and causing the airbags to deploy.

While the reckless stunt allowed the driver to escape a pursuing police cruiser, he wasn't at large for long.

Niagara Regional Police officers from the canine unit found the driver hiding in some bushes after he ditched the damaged truck, not far from the bridge.

"He did suffer from puncture wounds from where the dog bit him on the leg," said police spokesman Const. Derek Watson. The made-for-TV police pursuit was the end result of an investigation that started in late November when the pickup truck was reported stolen from a residence in Fonthill.

Watson said on Dec. 5 an NRP officer on patrol in the area of Glendale Ave. and the Welland Canal Parkway in St. Catharines spotted the truck and tried to pull it over.

Officers tried to box the truck in with police cruisers.

It didn't go as planned.

"Instead of stopping, the driver of the truck rammed a police cruiser and kept on going," Watson said.

The truck was found again early Saturday morning on Hartzell Rd.

Watson said the pursuit began around 12:30 a.m., with police chasing the truck from Hartzell Rd. to Queenston Rd.

As the truck got close to the Homer Bridge, the safety gates came down and the bridge started to open to make way for a passing ship.

Watson said the truck didn't stop, crashing the through the gates and jumping the gap over the water.

"It definitely became airborne, coming down violently on the other side," said Watson. "Obviously, the pursuit was stopped at that point."

Police found the truck abandoned in a parking lot on Coon Rd. and York Rd., not far from the bridge.



This is what was left of the Chevy Silverado after a driver tried to jump the gap as Homer Bridge started to go up early Saturday morning. QMI Agency Niagara

Const. Brent Sathmary and his dog Zoey from the NRP canine unit tracked the driver down.

"He was hiding in the bushes," Watson said.

Keith Sider, 35 of Niagara

Falls, is charged with mischief over \$5,000, possession of stolen property over \$5,000, flight from police and dangerous operation of a motor vehicle.

He is being held in cus-

tody pending a bail hearing.

The charges are connected to the Homer Bridge incident. Watson said the Dec. 5 pursuit is still under investigation.

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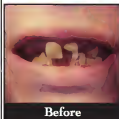
DOUBLE WATERFRONT LOT! \$1,390,000



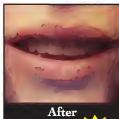
This majestic and classic home is from the bygone era with the benefit of major updating. Grand entertaining main floor with rich wood trim and 3 sets of solid wood pocket doors. Amazing kitchen with granite counters. Full width back verandah with breathtaking lake & sunsets. Hundreds of thousands of dollars spent to make for efficient living.



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7pm Worship Service

11pm Worship Service

Christmas Day Service 11am

PENNY COLES Niagara Advance

The Niagara Historical Society entered an 1812-themed float in this year's NOTL Christmas Parade. Parliament Oak students danced up a storm through the Old Town streets, while Gary Burroughs (right) and his wife Sarah wave to the crowds Saturday morning and the Fort George Fife and Drum Corps march along Queen St.

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Crossroads and St Davids Facing 20% Overcapacity

- ▶ Both schools will be overcapacity even without Parliament Oak's students.
- ▶ 1500+ new housing starts = 120+ kids in 5 to 10 years.
- ▶ Young families are moving to NOTL from more expensive urban areas.
- ▶ Parliament Oak's JK class nearly tripled this year; Niagara Nursery has a wait list.

We'd like to work with the DSBN to ensure they have updated data.

The Simple Solution? Save Parliament Oak!

It Saves Taxpayers' Money

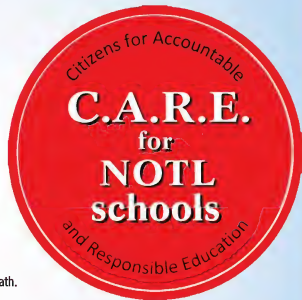
- ▶ Portables, expansion, and bussing if shut down = more than \$2M. (\$100K/new portable; \$700K-\$1.4M/addition)
- ▶ DSBN invested \$1.6M renovating Parliament Oak since 2009. Let's use this asset!
- ▶ Losing Old Town's last public school will hurt property values.

It Puts Students First

- ▶ Parliament Oak scores well above DSBN and provincial averages for literacy and math.
- ▶ Parliament Oak + Crossroads = 600 students—more than many Toronto schools!
- ▶ Huge classes, overcrowded programs, and long bus rides leave many kids behind.

It Honours Our Heritage

- ▶ The property was gifted to the town to be used for a school.
- ▶ The first law abolishing slavery in a British colony was signed on the site in 1793.



If you agree that Parliament Oak should stay open, contact us.

Please visit www.careNOTL.ca
or email careNOTL@yahoo.ca.

Protect Our Communities • Protect Our Schools

opinion page

Niagara Advance

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our editorial

Let's aim for peace and goodwill at Christmas

If ever there is a time for looking at the world around us and feeling grateful for how fortunate we are in our little corner of it, this is it.

But it's not as easy as it sounds. We're stressed. At home. At work. With all the social engagements around the holidays. With the shopping we have to do.

It's all good, but it's too much packed into too short a time, and we end up feeling overwhelmed by it all instead of enjoying it.

But we know there are many, many people in other parts of the world who have real reason to be stressed, and it's nothing to do with the holiday.

Even here, there are some among us, perhaps many, who are alone, depressed, missing loved ones. Not pressured by too much socializing and shopping, but depressed from having nobody to socialize with or shop for.

We can help ourselves by thinking of others. Look around you. See if there

is some small good deed, some gift of a window of time, that can help a friend or neighbour. Maybe it's shovelling snow. Perhaps dropping off a card or a token gift. An invitation to dinner.

Generosity is all around us. Is it inside us?

Some celebrate Christmas because of the birth of a child born centuries ago. Others don't celebrate Christmas at all but are happy to have some extra time with loved ones.

Whatever our religion or holiday traditions, we can surely find it in our busy schedule to think of others, to show some kindness and generosity of spirit.

We all know deep in our hearts what is important in our lives. It just sometimes gets forgotten in the busyness of the season.

Have a lovely, safe holiday. Enjoy a few days of calm. Think about what's really important. And see how long you can hold that thought.

Niagara of the Past



PENNY COLES Niagara Advance

Jim Smith has become an unofficial town historian with his large collection of old photographs he supplies to the Advance, customarily in this space, and to others, including the authors of several books on the history of Niagara-on-the-Lake. He was chosen to be the honorary marshal for the 2013 Christmas Parade, and led the parade from a horse-drawn carriage with his wife Heidi through the streets of the Old Town Saturday.

Thank you to everyone who is so generous with donations to help needy at Christmas

Food bank received generous donations of cash, food

Here we are in a beautiful winter wonderland. I hope everyone is enjoying it although it means lots of shovelling.

We have had another very busy two weeks at the Newark Neighbours barn getting ready for our Christmas program. The boxes are being filled and distributed this week.

Once again the commu-



Bonnie Turner
Newark Neighbours

nity is being very, very generous with donations of food, toys, gifts and treats. Thank you go out to Christ Church McNab, Grace United Church, The

Creekside Seniors Estates in St. David's, the Niagara-on-the-Lake Hydro staff who collected at their office and at the parade on Saturday, Mr. and Mrs. D. Garrett, St. Andrews Church, the Royal Canadian Legion Branch 124, Glen and Ruth Hunter, St Mark's Ladies Tea group, TD Canada Trust in Virgil, the Vintage Inns, Parliament Oak School, St David's Public School, Pillitteri Winery, Riverbend Inn and Vineyards and St. Vincent de Paul Catholic Women's League. The RBC bank in NOTL did a gift tree collection for kids. We

received a donation of food and toys from "Penteco" but in our hurry did not note if you are a person or company. Thank you.

We have received beautifully knitted hats, mitts, scarves, slippers, baby blankets and sweaters, all hand done by Mrs I Seiler of the NOTL Knotty Knitters Club and Mary Paylor. They will make welcome gifts during this cold December.

The St. David's Firefighters donated eight lovely turkeys. We also appreciate the food and toys dropped off at the Advance office, so thank

you to everyone who did that for us.

The Bethany Mennonite Boys Club had a food drive and brought in more than 1,100 lbs. of food for us, averaging about 20 lbs. per boy.

What a great accomplishment on their part. Their effort helped to fill our food boxes.

As you may know we now have membership in Newark Neighbours and Mark Deneen of Brookdale Treeland Nurseries donated two Christmas planters for a draw for our members. Thank you, Mark, they were beautiful.

If you are interested in becoming a member please contact us in the New Year.

Again we wish to thank everyone who supports Newark Neighbours now and throughout the year.

The board of directors and all the volunteers wish everyone a very Merry Christmas.

We will be closed for shopping from Dec. 20 to Jan. 2.

Our hours of operations are Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday from 9:30 a.m. to 2 p.m.

We can be reached at 905-468-3519.

Lord Mayor, council send best wishes to NOTL at Christmas

Many reasons why community is a great place to live and work



Lord Mayor Dave Eke
Council Update

Christmas is such a special time of year, and like you, I look forward to gathering with family and friends.

However, the holidays also afford us a time to essentially catch our breath and reflect on everything that is good and meaningful in our lives.

For me, that also means recognizing what makes this community such a wonderful place to live and work. For instance, last month, Town council

recognized a number of residents who give so unselfishly of themselves to make other people's lives better. Each year, our Volunteer Recognition Awards ceremony reminds me how fortunate we are to have so many dedicated volunteers in our midst.

The same can be said of many others who go about their daily lives and yet quietly contribute their time and services to local programs and the many events here in Town – such as the Seniors

Strawberry Social, Canada Day at Fort George, Village Stampede, Candlelight Stroll, Santa Claus Parade and of course, the current War of 1812 Bicentennial commemorations. Many of these events and activities would not be possible without their kind spirit and generosity.

There have been great things happening in this Town over the last few years. We have hosted some spectacular events through the War of 1812 Bicentennial Committee and Parks Canada, attract-

ing thousands of people from all walks of life.

Our library and community centre, as well as the new splash pad and pavilion, have provided more recreational options for residents.

NOTL Transit continues to make inroads in connecting us both from within and with other communities.

A balanced approach to residential growth has led to a number of significant housing projects, and we continue to attract a range of new business-

es, from professional services to micro-breweries to a massive outdoor retail shopping centre, which is on track to open in May of next year.

I think this year, though we may have faced challenges and hardships, we all have much to be thankful for.

On behalf of Town Council, I wish you and your family the very best this Christmas and look forward to working with you in the new year as we further enrich the well-being of our community.

Emmanuel – God with us, and with a message for us

Jesus has many names, the most endearing of which is

Emmanuel

Names of endearment. Is that even a phrase? Works for me.

Let me explain. I'm prone to call people by their birth names. Pat or Patty - I'll sometimes call Patricia. Vic - Victor. Jenn

- Jennifer. Marty - Martin. I've noticed that most of the time, people like to have endearment attached to the use of their name. "Most" of the time. Just the other day I called a long-time friend whose name is Terry, Terrance. Nope. Not a good idea. I'll never do that again.

My wife's name is Cathy. Her birth names are Mary Catherine. I call her Mary almost more



Rick Mills
Life Abundant Church
Consider This

than I do Cathy. She likes it - from me. She calls me Rick, Ricky or Richard.

When I hear any of them, it could be good, very good, bad or ugly. Endearment. I often call my two boys by their middle names. I think they like it. Names identify us. Everyone has a desire or need to be recognized - somehow.

My little sister's name is Kim. I often call her

Kimberly, and every now and then I'll throw in her middle name. That is a recognition that will go unsaid, as I would risk my brotherhood by disclosure.

Jesus had numerous names and titles. In the Christmas story we find one of His most endearing names - Emmanuel. It was first spoken by the prophet Isaiah to Ahaz, King of Judah, some 700 years before the birth of Jesus. God was promising His people He wouldn't leave them to the hands of their enemies.

There was a plan for salvation that not even man could thwart.

The Christmas carol says it like, "O come, O come, Emmanuel/ And ransom captive Israel..." In Matthew's gospel (the Christmas story) we're told what the name

Emmanuel really means, "Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and bear a Son, and they shall call His name Emmanuel," which is translated, "God with us."

I see this entire verse encompassing the meaning of "God with us." The core took what every Christian believes - I. He was born of a virgin, 2. He came in the flesh, 3. He is still with us.

A virgin? Yes. Man was fallen. His seed corrupted. God took the egg, the womb, and the faith of a woman, but He took the seed of Himself. The apostle Peter captures it as thus, "having been born again, not of corruptible seed but incorruptible, through the word of God which lives and abides forever."

In the flesh? This is equally important to

believe. Why? If He wasn't a man, then He didn't or couldn't die. If He didn't die, He didn't pay for my sin. If He didn't pay for my sin - I'm not redeemed.

Hebrews chapter two, the 14th verse, says it beautifully, "Because God's children are human beings—made of flesh and blood—the Son also became flesh and blood. For only as a human being could he die, and only by dying could he break the power of the devil, who had the power of death (New Living Translation)."

Joy to the World. Oh, did I say that out loud? The Christian believes that He is still with us. That "Joy to the World" lives beyond seasonal festivities.

Jesus told His disciples that the Father would send them a helper, a

comforter, the Spirit of truth, who would abide with them forever.

During our town's Christmas parade last week I was enjoying standing at the side of the road and shaking hands with many of the parade participants, wishing one another a Merry Christmas. I thought to myself, wouldn't it be nice if we could be amicable like this at every daily occurrence.

What is it about this season that causes us to change? Emmanuel - God with us. Born of a virgin, came and died in the flesh, still with us - that most endearing name, Jesus. Not one of many messengers sent by God. He was God with a message.

And what a message it is.

Merry Christmas.

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We would like to thank those who donated to our annual Toy & Food Drive. Your help will ensure that NOTL families have a more enjoyable holiday season. **Happy Holidays from NOTL Hydro!**

NOTL Hydro Holiday Hours: Our regular office hours are 8:30am to 4:30pm. 24-hour emergency service will still be available, please call 905.468.4235. Our drop box will still available for cheque payments.

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30th Closed	31st Closed	1st Closed	2nd Open	3rd Open

Council approves 2014 budget, including upgrades to tennis courts

➤ Roads, water pipes will use up more than half of capital investments

Suzanne Mason
OMI Agency Niagara

Property owners will see an increase of just

under 2% in the municipal portion of their taxes next year.

Town council approved a \$7.8 million operating budget and a \$9.6 million capital budget Monday.

About \$1.8 million will come out of the tax levy for the 88 capital projects approved and the rest of the fundings from reserves and development charges.

"We are one of the only municipalities to prepare a budget for the next year, prior to the year," said Coun. Gary Zalepa Jr. "We can get out to tender early on (capital) projects to get good quotes (which) save quite a bit on tax dollars."

More than half of the budget for capital projects - a total of \$5.2 million - will be used for repairs and

replacement of infrastructure for roads and water systems.

Public works director Ewald Kuzera said another 25% of the water pipes need to be converted from cast iron to plastic.

Other major projects include work on Line 9 and concessions, Four Mile Creek Rd., and the Queenston St. bridge.

The fire department will receive \$300,000 to buy a new ladder truck for servicing the Glendale area. A new park will be developed behind the St. David's Fire Hall, and fitness equipment and a playground will be installed at the Virgil Sportspark.

Councillors also directed staff to cover all existing tennis courts with an

acrylic finish after they have received a new asphalt surface. Several residents have lobbied councillors in recent weeks for recoating the surfaces following a presentation by Rosemary Goodwin in October.

No timeline was set for the improvements which will cost about \$6,000 per court.



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NOTICE OF PUBLIC MEETING

479 Line 1 Road - Zoning Amendment



PROPOSED CHANGE

To rezone two lots to permit single detached dwellings on each lot (shown as Parts 1 and 2).

HAVE YOUR SAY

Input on any proposed matter is welcome and encouraged. You can provide input by speaking at the public meeting or by making a written submission to the Town.

PUBLIC MEETING

Date: January 13, 2014

Time: 7:00 p.m.

Place: Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake

Administration Offices

Council Chambers

1593 Four Mile Creek Road, Virgil, Ontario

WRITTEN SUBMISSION

To provide input in writing, or to request personal notice if the proposed change is adopted, please send a letter c/o Town Clerk Holly Dowd, 1593 Four Mile Creek Road, P.O. Box 100, Virgil, Ontario, L0S 1T0.

MORE INFORMATION

For more information please contact Brynne O'Neill at 905-468-3266, extension 297. A copy of this notice can be found on the Town's website at www.notl.org.

LEGAL NOTICE

Section 34 of the Planning Act

If a person or public body does not make oral submissions at a public meeting or make written submissions to the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake before this matter is passed, the person or public body is not entitled to appeal the decision of the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake Council to the Ontario Municipal Board.

If a person or public body does not make oral submissions at a public meeting, or make written submission to the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake before this matter is passed, the person or public body may not be added as a party to the hearing of an appeal before the Ontario Municipal Board unless, in the opinion of the Board, there is reasonable grounds to do so. If you wish to be notified of the decision of Town Council in respect to this matter, you must make a written request to the Town Clerk.

Dated at the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake this 19th day of December 2013.

2014 WATER AND WASTEWATER RATES

The Council of the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake has passed By-law 4690-13 to amend water and wastewater rates, effective January 1, 2014. A decision was made in 2011 to amend the rate structure to provide for a graduated fixed charge based on water meter size (which relates to the water service connection) and was done after careful consideration of a financial plan for each of the water distribution and wastewater collection systems to ensure their long-term sustainability.

The fixed monthly charge and variable rate for water will increase by 2% over last year's charge and rate.

The fixed monthly charge and variable rate for wastewater will increase by 2% over last year's charge and rate.

A copy of the new rate card below will be included in your next water bill. For further information on these rates and how they impact your water and wastewater billing, please visit the Town's web site at www.notl.org under Hot Topics - "Notice to Water and Wastewater Customers," or call the Public Works Department at 905-468-3278.

Effective January 1, 2014

Water Rates

The monthly billing amount shall be calculated based on:

Fixed Charge per the following schedule:

METER SIZE (INCHES)	FIXED CHARGE
Up to 3/4"	21.79
1"	30.51
1 1/2"	39.22
2"	63.19
3"	239.69
4"	305.06
6"	457.59
8"	631.91
10"	871.60

Plus Variable Water Rate \$1,3160 per cubic metre multiplied by the water consumption, in cubic metres, from water meter readings.

Effective January 1, 2014

Wastewater Rates

The monthly billing amount shall be calculated based on:

Fixed Charge per the following schedule:

METER SIZE (INCHES)	FIXED CHARGE
Up to 3/4"	23.84
1"	33.38
1 1/2"	42.91
2"	69.14
3"	262.24
4"	333.76
6"	500.64
8"	691.36
10"	953.60

Plus Variable Wastewater Rate \$0.9072 per cubic metre multiplied by the water consumption, in cubic metres, from water meter readings.

Town collects taxes back three years for increased assessments

Penny Colles
Niagara Advocate

Five Niagara-on-the-Lake businesses have received an unwelcome surprise, a surprise that comes with a hefty price tag.

Penner Building Centre is one of them, with a tax bill that arrived earlier this month asking for almost \$150,000 in addition to the taxes of \$60,000 a year the business has already paid.

When a commercial or residential property owner applies for a building permit for renovations or expansions, it is understood that increasing the value of their property could bring a corresponding increase in property taxes, says Marcia Penner.

But a little known fact about assessment and MPAC, the provincial agency that provides municipalities with property assessments, is that they can go back three years to catch up with increases.

The local Home Hardware store owners put up a storage warehouse on their facility in 2010, and began using it in January 2011, says Penner. They sent MPAC all the information that was requested, and their taxes did go up a little.

"We thought, okay, good, that was not so bad," says Penner.

"But no, apparently that was just the normal increase in assessment."

With no warning and no idea that MPAC could take three years to process that paperwork, the Virgil hardware store received its re-assessment this month, and a tax bill from the Town asking for an additional \$47,000 for each of 2011, 2012 and 2013. They

will be appealing, says Penner.

"This is a major hit. And the bottom line is it's not right what they're doing. They're under-staffed (at MPAC) and they're behind, and I don't believe they're fully informed, that they know what they're doing or that they even visited our facility. They wait right until the end of the third year and then they send us this. It's crazy. How can we possibly have planned for this? We had no idea it was coming."

Rainer Hummel is another Niagara-on-the-Lake businessman who has been re-assessed.

When the canning plant in St. David's closed, he bought it and turned it into office space for his development company and to lease to tenants.

Although it's been extensively renovated, it's actually

less space than when he bought it, he said.

But he recently received another property tax bill, this one for \$124,000 on top of what he's already paid.

It too includes a re-assessment for 2011, 2012 and 2013, and he has until Dec. 31 to pay it.

"We've been in this business for a long time and this has never happened," he said.

"Something changed in the system and it has become more inefficient and predatory."

He said he will be billing his tenants, according to the terms of their respective leases.

"We had no idea something this draconian and job-killing was on the horizon. I believe the government changed the rules recently to accommodate the incompetence of MPAC and we are

the ones who get screwed."

Donna Lake, revenue coordinator for the Town, says legislation allows increased assessments to be back-dated two years plus the current year.

"It happens all the time," she says.

This year, says Lake, the re-assessments only affected a handful of commercial

property owners, but residential taxpayers can find themselves in the same predicament, and have in recent years.

People should realize, she said, that they have not been assessed fully. If they have a new dwelling, an expansion or renovations, and there will be a tax bill coming based on that

value. Legislation allows it to happen."

MPAC is making an effort to get notices out in a timely fashion - the number of back-dated re-assessments declines each year, she says. "It's happening less and less," says Lake.

"But unfortunately it happens, and when it does it's hard on the property owner."

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Season's Greetings and Best Wishes for the Coming Year

From Lord Mayor Dave Eke, Members of Council and
Staff of the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake



From left to right: Lord Mayor Dave Eke,
Councilors Gary Zalepa, Dennis Dick, Terry Flynn, Jim Collard,
Jamie King, Andrea Kaiser, Maria Bau-Coote.
Absent: Martin Mazza.

Humane society denied grant but will continue to serve NOTL director says

➤ Rejection based on confusion over information received about operation of shelter

Penny Coles
Niagara Advance

The Lincoln County Humane Society has lost out on funding from the Town for its spay and neuter clinic, but will continue to serve its Niagara-on-the-Lake clients, says executive director Kevin Strooband.

The Town's discretionary grant committee recommended turning down a grant for \$5,500 for the clinic, which it has supported in recent years.

But not this year. In 2011, explains grant committee member Jamie King, the humane society asked the Town for a five-

year commitment of funds to help fund their new spay/neuter clinic.

Instead of approving a multi-year agreement, council decided instead to give a grant of \$5,500, and asked the humane society to re-apply each year, explained King.

The grant was approved in 2011 and 2012, and in 2013, was approved contingent on receiving some additional information—specifically, who owns and runs the clinic.

That question was never answered, the grant money was never given to the humane society, and an application for a 2014 grant was received.

"We asked again for more information—who is running the clinic and who requires the funds," said King.

He said the committee wanted to support the clinic, but felt more information was needed.

After several requests for information this fall, the

Town finally got the answer—the Ontario Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals is operating the clinic.

"That is to us critical information," said King.

"The request came from the humane society for the funds to run the clinic, but they're not running it. It might seem like splitting hairs. We want to make sure from a granting perspective that the money is going to the right place. We're not saying it's not going there, just that there is a real lack of clarity surrounding the request."

If a response had been received earlier, he added, the financial arrangement between the two agencies could have been sorted out. It's an unusual situation, added King, who has worked in the grant industry.

"A potential founder asks for information, generally you do what you can to provide it."

The committee weighs its decisions carefully, King

said.

"It's difficult to say no."

The LCHS owns the building, but the clinic is managed and operated by the OSPCA, in partnership with the humane society, says Strooband.

He agrees that he was asked for information regarding the running of the clinic, and when he saw the emails, he said, he responded.

The grant money, he added, would have gone to the same place—the clinic.

Regardless of the Town's decision, he added, "we will continue to serve the residents of NOTL."

Council approved a discretionary grant budget of \$243,000 for 2014 Monday.

Topping the list is \$83,740 for the Niagara Historical Society and Museum. The Shaw Festival Theatre will receive \$23,500 for marketing the Chamber of Commerce receives \$30,000 as a fee for service agreement for the tourism centre at Fort George. Niagara

College receives \$20,000 as an annual referral on taxes.

The Niagara District Airport will receive \$18,948 from the Town in accordance with its responsibility as one of three municipalities supporting the airport.

Other organizations granted lesser amounts include the NOTL Palliative Care Service, Riverbrink Art Museum, the Friends of Fort George, the Niagara PumpHouse Art Centre, the Niagara Workers Welcome Concert, the Market at the Village, the Chamber of Commerce, the Royal Canadian Legion and Music Niagara.

The Lincoln County Humane Society wasn't alone in being rejected for a grant. The Niagara Hot Air Balloon Festival, a group working on a native memorial at Queenston Heights, St. Mark's Church, the Village Community Association and Niagara Nursery School applied for grants that were turned down.

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Parents, community battling myth with fact to keep school open

Board working with outdated figures when projecting enrolment, group says

Penny Coles
Niagara Advocate

Parliament Oak parents are battling myth with fact. Chiefly, says Robin Ridesic, one of the organiz-

ers of CARE (Citizens for Accountable and Responsible Education), this large group of residents—not just parents, but also business leaders and community members—is out to convince the Niagara

District School Board their numbers are wrong.

Members are sporting red buttons around town, and hoping for support through an online petition.

They put forward a co-ordinated effort at the recent public accommodation review meeting, but aren't stopping there, says Ridesic.

"We have a huge cross-section of people from Niagara-on-the-Lake, including parents from Crossroads and St. David's (public schools), people from the Chamber of Commerce and the business community, and local residents who don't have children."

Their goal is to educate people about the possibility Parliament Oak School might close, and why, she said.

"We're shocked at how many people don't understand the issues. We are trying to make sure everyone's aware of what's in

motion."

The accommodation review committee is looking at the future of Parliament Oak in conjunction with Crossroads Public School, the two-year-old facility in Virgil.

The school board is dealing with excess capacity across the board, and parents of both schools, and St. David's, which is not included in the review, fear the board decision will be to close the Old Town school and bus those students to the other two elementary schools, without having a good grasp of enrolment trends.

The board's mandate, the review committee has heard, is to reduce surplus seats.

"There are a lot of myths out there about capacity," says Ridesic, "and about growth rates, enrolment numbers and demographics."

The board is using numbers from a report that was

written four years ago, and the numbers have changed since then, she says.

"We want to make sure they have the best information, dated from today and not four years ago. We don't believe there is going to be excess capacity in just a few year's time."

The board designed Crossroads based on projections that enrolment would decline, but that isn't happening, said Ridesic.

"Crossroads will be over capacity with Parliament Oak students, and that's not taking into consideration all the development that is happening in the community. We believe it would be very short-sighted to close Parliament Oak."

Enforcing school boundaries is an important component of the solution to surplus capacity at Parliament Oak, she said.

See Page 13

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Christopher Newton Award for Extraordinary Vision in Business

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Closing school 'bad for taxpayers'

From Page 12

There are 70 Old Town students being bused to Crossroads in Virgil, and while the group doesn't advocate forcing those students to return to their home school, enforcing the boundaries in the future would bring Parliament Oak to 80% capacity in eight years, she said.

Closing the school will mean requiring capital investments at the other schools or building a new facility, she said.

"Any option that includes closing our school given updated numbers, is bad for the community and bad for taxpayers."

The online petition is to show the board that com-

munities across Niagara-on-the-Lake are outside when it comes to the future of the three elementary schools, unlike some of the debates during the discussions about the future of Niagara District Secondary School.

"This time, the broader community is aligned."

The group hopes to convince the accommodation review committee that their only option is to recommend the board keep Parliament Oak open.

And to do that, "we have a lot of experienced people who are fully capable and willing to do the leg work to show that we have the numbers."

The group is even willing if it becomes neces-

sary, to pay for a study commissioned by the school board that would provide the most recent data.

"We're laying out the facts but if they're not 100% comfortable with that we'll find a study for them. We know our numbers are right. We want to make sure we get the correct information to the board staff and trustees."

CARE is holding its next meeting Sunday, Dec 29 at 3 p.m. at the NOTL Community Centre in the Niagara Nursery School room and invites anyone interested in getting involved to join them.

For more information visit CAREnotl.ca or email CAREnotl@yahoo.com.



PENNY COLES Niagara Advance
 Gingerbread man Ethan Frankum-MacRae, Christmas tree Seth Woelke and Parliament Oak student Maya Gazzard wave to the crowd from the CARE float - Citizens for Accountable and Responsible Education.

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Decommissioning lagoons could be expensive project

➤ **Harmony Residents Group lobbying for natural wetlands**

**Penny Coles
Niagara Advance**

Spend somewhere in the neighbourhood of \$7 million to remove any remaining sludge from the current sewage lagoons when they are decommissioned and fill in the ponds; or spend considerably less and let nature look after itself.

Those are the choices facing the region, and while converting the Lakeshore Rd. lagoons to natural wetlands might be an attractive option, and certainly the less expensive choice, it will be up to Parks Canada, which owns the property, to decide what it wants.

The region and Parks Canada are in negotiation over the remediation of the current 57-acre site of the waste water treatment plant, which the region will hand back to Parks Canada in exchange for 10 acres 800 metres west of the site. The remediation is just one part of the lease agreement that will allow plans for a new treatment plant to move forward.

The agreement is expected to be finalized by February, according to a timetable that would see the new \$43.3 million facility operational by 2017.

Funding from the federal government for its third of the project was announced for the new treatment plant just over a year ago—none too soon for the region, which was anxious to move forward on the project, for the Town, which has some development applications on hold until it's complet-

ed, or for town residents living nearby who often complain of foul odors emanating from the 20-year-old facility. The region and province will fund the rest of the infrastructure investment.

Recently the Harmony Residents Group has resurfaced. The group was established about five years ago to oppose Project Niagara, a summer music festival that was proposed for the Parks Canada Lakeshore Rd. property.

Harmony members instead began working on plans for a natural heritage park, and although the plug was pulled on the music festival in 2010 for lack of funding, "we never stopped working toward a park that would preserve and protect the property and be open to residents and visitors," says Peter Harvey, one of its members.

The group is lobbying Parks Canada and the region, hoping to see the lagoons converted to natural wetlands.

Members have done their research, and are able to point to other decommissioned sewage lagoons where natural wetlands clean up the sludge at the bottom of the ponds, eliminating the need for expensive dredging.

The lagoons would be a perfect habitat for plants and wildlife. Many of them species at risk, says Harvey, and would introduce new species to the area.

"Simply filling in the ponds would totally destroy habitat essential to birds presently using the lagoons as nesting sites or as a refueling stop before continuing fall and spring migration," says a Harmony group report to the region.

Harvey says his group asked for a cost of returning the lagoons to the "pristine condition"

Parks Canada originally asked for, and was told somewhere between \$3 million and \$10 million, depending on what the final remediation plan calls for.

Harmony is estimating, based on research where conversion to natural wetlands has taken place, their preferred option might cost about \$500,000 or less.

"We're not sure what it would cost, but it would be peanuts in comparison," Harvey said.

"Can they [Parks Canada] force the region to spend that kind of money for something that isn't necessary, and isn't even as good a solution? That's what we're worried about."

Members are concerned the region may agree to spending more than necessary to get an agreement signed, and allow the project to move forward, says Harvey.

He asks why Parks Canada and the region can't agree to put remediation on the back burner for now and move on, then revisit the decommissioning issue when Parks Canada knows what it wants to do with the property.

As regional chair, Gary Burnham has adopted a "hands-off" approach to the negotiations.

As a resident who is a "wetlands" kind of guy who has been fascinated by the lagoons since the early experimental days of Ed Lemon, he knows where his heart lies.

"It's a little concerned that an agreement could be delayed because of the remediation issue, which Parks Canada, as we see leverage, he says, but is grateful there are residents such as the Harmony group lobbying for natural wetlands and making the issue public.



Wetlands will clean up remaining sludge

From Page 14

He, like Harmony members, cites sewage lagoons west of Grimsby which were allowed to convert to natural wetlands over a five-year period. Sludge at the bottom was found to be "beautifully decomposed and clean," he said.

Last October Lord Mayor Dave Eke and Regional Chair Gary Burroughs celebrated the federal funding for a new waste water treatment plant on Lakeshore Rd. Now there is some concern the issue of remediation might hold up the project.

And there would be no odor to worry about once the sewage is gone, he said.

But it's important to define what Parks Canada is asking for, said Burroughs.

"We have a responsibility to clean it up, and it's a big project, but what does cleaning it up mean? A meadow with grasses growing? A trail? Wetlands? It depends on what they want to do with the property."

There is an added element that Burroughs sees to the project: the new waste water treatment plant will use the same pipe to take treated water out to the lake—the

pipe that goes right by one of the ponds. That could be the water source for the wetlands, and with the area open to the public, would provide an excellent tool for education.

"But we don't get the land from Parks Canada until we resolve the clean-up. We need to get Parks Canada and the region onside to move forward. Engineering (of the treatment plant) is a big piece of the process and we're working on it. So far the process is moving forward but we need to get serious so negotiations over remediation don't hold it up."

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Town's new flag unveiled at Court House

➤ 'From ashes comes rebirth and hope' as flag raised 200 years from Dec. 10, 1813 burning of town

Jennifer Chormley
Special to the Advance

The historic Courthouse that was once the town hall was the site of the unveiling of the town's new flag and coat of arms Tuesday.

It was 200 years ago to the date that departing American troops occupying the town during the War of 1812 left their mark by burning the town to the ground, leaving only two structures still stand-

ing. Smoldering ashes were all that remained, leaving women, children and old men homeless in the bitter winter elements—the majority of men were either soldiers or had been taken prisoner.

Lord Mayor Dave Eke, accompanied by Right. Rev. Ralph Spence, Albion Herald Extraordinary, led the unveiling ceremony.

Spence, who served as bishop of the Anglican Diocese of Niagara from 1998 to 2008, represented the Chief Herald and read the official proclamation. He is one of only four Canadians who hold the title of herald extraordinary.

The process to establishing a new town flag and coat of arms began two years ago. During this time, Eke worked with

local community organizations - the Municipal Heritage Committee, Friends of Fort George and the 1812 Bicentennial Committee—and held public meetings on how the town was to be symbolized.

"It was a positive and engaging process," Eke said.

With support from the organizations behind him, he said, the next question was - when is an appropriate time to unveil the new image?

It was Tony Chisholm a volunteer with the 1812 Bicentennial committee who suggested the flag be unveiled on the exact anniversary of the town's burning 200 years ago.

Eke agreed. "We thought this was a fitting date to introduce a symbol of hope and promise

given the devastation that occurred exactly 200 years to the day, the burning of our town. From ashes comes rebirth and hope."

Spence described the new flag and coat of arms as a "knockout job and is something that every resident in Niagara-on-the-Lake can be proud of."

Following the official proclamation ceremony, there was a procession to the front of the Court House to officially raise the flag, led by the Fort George Fife and Drum Corps and completed by an honour guard from the 809 New Squadron Air Cadets.

The procession then continued on to St. Mark's Church for a special service commemorating the Burning of Niagara.



The new town flag was raised at the Court House last week.



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Arms: The colours refer to the Royal Union Flag.

Mace: a gilt wood object dating from 1792, indicates that NOTL, known then as Newark, was the first capital of the province of Upper Canada.

Maple leaf corncobs further this allusion and indicate the town's Canadian identity.

Crest: Brock's

Monument is an important local landmark, commemorating the Battle of Queenston Heights in 1812.

Motto: This existing town motto alludes to the local fruit industry.

Supporters: Lions were used with the town's previous arms. The ribbons around their necks are the colour associated with Butler's Rangers, who settled in the Niagara area following the American Revolutionary War. Gorgets were worn by British Army officers until 1830, and the one on the lion thus alludes to the regiment's leader, Captain John Butler, who farmed in Niagara and is buried

in town.

The other lion wears a medal as a reference to the medals bearing the King's effigy given to First Nations chiefs in recognition of their alliance with the Crown, and acknowledges the support of the First Nations during the War of 1812, which helped to build a peaceful foundation in the area for the years to follow.

The 1707 design of the Royal Union Flag is used as a symbol of Loyalist heritage.

The stylized water represents Lake Ontario and the Niagara River, and the base pays tribute to the importance of the local fruit and wine industries.

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Inniskillin winemaker Bruce Nicholson is happy to have Cabernet Franc and Riesling grapes harvested for icewine before Christmas.

Photo submitted

Icewine harvest under way

Frigid temperatures this week have led to the harvesting of icewine grapes at local wineries.

Rief Estate Winery began picking a week ago, and Inniskillin, where grapes are left on the vine until the temperature reaches -10

Celsius, picking began at the Line 4 vineyard at Concession 6 on Saturday morning.

"It is always nice to get these two vinifera varieties off before Christmas due to their thinner skin. The harvesting of the thicker skinned Vidal

grapes allow for it to be picked later if needed while still maintaining good quantity and quality," says Inniskillin winemaker Bruce Nicholson.

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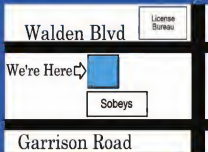
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Penguins' chilly Boxing Day dip to raise money for Red Roof

Penny Coles
Niagara Advance

Instead of lounging around on the couch Boxing Day moaning about how much you've eaten over the holidays, get up and do something.

And that something, says Penguin Dip veteran Chris Bjorgan, could be a dip in the Niagara River.

He never knows who is going to show up or what kind of crowd to expect, other than the regulars, but every Boxing Day for more than three decades has seen a group of brave men and women—some say crazy—take a plunge into the frigid waters off the shore of Ball's Beach.

Several of Bjorgan's family members also participate. His older brother

Lorne is a regular, and his younger brother Moe will go in this year, although he hasn't in recent years. Moe's sons Owen and Isaac are also taking the plunge.

Two of Chris's daughters are regulars but aren't going this year.

He also has a daughter who has never gone in and never will.

"She says she hates the cold and she isn't ever going to try it. I say everyone should try it once."

Once you get over the psychological hurdle, "it really isn't that bad," he says.

And although the weather has been unusually cold and harsh in the weeks leading up to Christmas, it really doesn't matter once you put a toe into the water.

"Cold is cold," says Bjorgan. "And the water is

always cold, even if it's a relatively mild day."

The tradition started back in the '70s, although nobody's sure exactly what year.

Becoming an official penguin means dipping three times each year for three years.

The group will meet at 12:30 p.m. at the bottom of Ball St. and enter the water at 1 p.m.

Twice in previous years the decision has been made to move the event to Queen's Royal Beach because the icy conditions, but everyone meets at Ball St. first.

A collection is taken up amongst

participants to pay for the heated truck, with any money left over going to Red Roof Retreat. This year, says Bjorgan, he plans to ask someone to pass the hat amongst spectators as well to try to beat last year's

\$300 total for Red Roof, a facility that provided programming for special needs children.

Chris Bjorgan, Penguin Dip organizer, celebrates his third dip last year. Advance file photo



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Jennifer Ward of CTV News 5 at the ICC Charity Event receives congratulations from Stephen Lukawski, Owner, Broker of Record, Century 21 City.

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Understanding heart attack is like dealing with your garden hose

Silent heart attack occurs without any symptoms

A friend of mine had been at the doctor's office for some tests. "They told me I had a heart attack, I didn't know I had a heart attack, but that's what they said."

At the InfoHealth lecture at the Niagara-on-the-Lake Public Library Wednesday, cardiologist Dr. Adrian Hameed, who is Adjunct Clinical Professor with McMaster University at the St. Catharines General Hospital, said a heart attack does not always have obvious symptoms, such as pain in your chest, or feeling light



Randy Klaassen
Senior's View

headed, sweaty or shortness of breath.

In fact, a heart attack can actually happen without a person knowing it. It is called a "silent heart attack" precisely because there has

been a lack of oxygen to the heart without the person being aware.

This occurs more often in women than men, and is just as serious as other heart attacks.

The main part of the presentation was given by medical students Manika Gupta and Stephanie Carnegelli.

While there is a lot of medical terminology related to heart attack, the students focused on interpreting complicated medical jargon into understandable language.

This is a major goal of the monthly InfoHealth series of medical presentations.

Gupta asked us to think of our arteries as a garden hose that supply blood to the body, and return it to the

heart and lungs.

When debris, called plaque (caused by bad cholesterol) builds up in arteries it decreases blood flow causing us to feel tired, until it blocks off our blood flow entirely and results in a heart attack.

Most of us know what causes plaque in our arteries – smoking, eating foods with bad cholesterol, not getting enough physical activity, diabetes, and being overweight.

But if we experience a "silent heart attack" how does a doctor know it happened?

Carnegelli described various tests for doctors to determine a heart attack has occurred. These include blood test, EKG (electrocardiogram, which checks the electrical activity of your heart), chest X-ray

(to see if your heart has become enlarged), stress test (will see how you handle physical activity), angiogram (dye is added to your blood which shows up on an X-ray to see if and where there are blockages), or an echocardiogram (an ultrasound of the heart to observe how it is functioning).

That's a lot of poking and prodding, yet it provides a doctor with a wealth of information on how your heart is doing.

Of course the better option than going through a series of tests is to develop a lifestyle pattern that reduces the risk of heart attack.

Gupta offered a number of important steps we can take to fix heart issues. On the negative side are items we need to cut out or at least reduce like smoking, salt, sweets, butter, and red meats.

To see the positive we can

add to our routines physical exercise, eating more Mediterranean foods, getting a good sleep at night, and practicing good oral hygiene.

This last item was a bit of a surprise to hear, yet Gupta explained that bacteria in the mouth are a good indicator of how the heart is functioning.

Oh, and that Mediterranean diet includes moderate alcohol, such as a glass of red wine. But make sure you ask your doctor or pharmacist about possible adverse reactions with alcohol if you are taking medications.

The InfoHealth sessions are always filled with lots of helpful information. Carnegelli summarized with the advice that if you think you might be having a heart attack, call 9-1-1 immediately.

See Page 35

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Books make great gifts

Library book sale continues to Christmas

Books make great Christmas gifts and not just because they're easy to wrap.

Giving a book opens up new worlds without the need for transportation, a passport or spending money. Books are a one-size fits all gift that doesn't need batteries or assembly.

So simplify your gift-giving this Christmas and buy your loved ones books from the library's book sale. All proceeds go towards enhancing library programs and services; another great reason to give the gift of reading!

Our Christmas sale kicked off in November with a special Black



Cathy Simpson
@the library

Friday event organized by Library Service Associate, Carole Butlin. Carole was mistakenly identified as a library volunteer in the Dec. 5 edition of the Niagara Advance but is in fact a library employee who joined the staff in 2011.

She brings her years of experience as W.H. Smith book store manager and London Public Library book store sales

associate to our ongoing book sale.

Since she began managing the sale, revenue has increased, allowing us to fund special projects like enhancing the children's French language collection and buying new furniture for the fireside reading area.

Thank you to Carole for doing such a great job and to everyone who supports the library with their book sale purchases.

Along side the book sale tables, you may have noticed a very large chess set.

The set is on loan from Greg Willis of Chess Nation Niagara (www.chessnation.org) until the new year and we encourage you to come out and play a game.

See page 39

**Join us for our
Christmas Eve
Service**

Follow the Light



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Chess tournament for kids

From page 38

He is organizing a chess tournament at the library on Dec. 28 for children of all skill levels in Grades 3 to 8. For more details and to register, contact Beth Labelle at the library at 905-468-2023 ext. 202.

As we get ready for Christmas, our thoughts turn to . . . the library garden?

Yes, we're hard at work planning a spring ground breaking for the Library Community Garden Project. With the latest donation, we've now raised \$16,000 of the \$70,000 needed. Thank you very much to the NOTL Horticultural Society who very gener-

ously donated \$5,000 to the project.

A donation to this wonderful community project will not only make you feel good inside, it will also qualify you for a charitable tax receipt and potential recognition in one of several garden naming opportunities.

And to help us reach our fundraising goal, we're seeking a fund-raising volunteer to head up the project. If you're interested in this volunteer opportunity or if you want to donate, please visit the library's website for a full job and project description: www.notlpubliclibrary.org.

Thank you to every-

one who so generously supports the library; Niagara-on-the-Lake is a truly giving community. We hope to see you @ the Library over the Christmas holidays. Our holiday hours are as follows:

Dec 24 - 9 a.m. - 1 p.m.
Dec 25 - Closed
Dec 26 - Closed

Dec 27 - 10 a.m. - 6 p.m.

Dec 28 - 10 a.m. - 5 p.m.

Dec 29 - 1 p.m. - 5 p.m.
Dec 30 - Closed
Jan 1 - Closed
Jan 2 - Regular hours
On behalf of the NOTL Public Library board and staff, we wish you a merry Christmas and a happy New Year.



Riley van't Riet ponders a move on the giant chess set on loan to the NOTL Public Library. Photo submitted

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Correction

In the Dec. 5 edition of the Niagara Advance, library employee Camie Butlin was incorrectly identified as a volunteer. The Advance apologizes for the error and any inconvenience it may have caused.

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Blood donor clinic returns to NOTL – fire chief hoping to increase donations

Need is great, donations down during holiday season

Penny Colles
Niagara Advance

Organizing the blood donor clinic held in Virgil

last August "was like throwing a party and hoping people show up," says Fire Chief Alex Burdidge.

It was the first clinic held in Niagara-on-the-Lake in more than a decade, and not only did people show up, they seemed to have a great time.

And the numbers far exceeded expectations.

But that doesn't mean Burdidge isn't hoping for an even better turn-out on the day after New Year's, when the town will hold its second clinic.

Many have committed to giving again Jan. 2, when Canadian Blood Services will offer a clinic at the community centre.

The summer clinic was held at the Virgil fire hall, and it was a tight squeeze.

"We had such a great turn-out, we were asked to do it again. The community centre is a good venue for

it," said Burdidge.

And if you have any doubt about whether you can find the time, think of the four-year-old boy in Port Colborne with leukemia, who requires regular donations to fight his illness. But this the time of year when the need for blood increases because of holiday collisions, while donations are down, said Burdidge.

"Nobody donates over the holidays, so there's a real need to get out there and help build up sup-

plies."

The fire chief already has his appointment—it will be his 51st donation.

The August clinic resulted in 51 units of blood collected for what was considered a trial run.

The next NOTL Blood Donor Clinic is being held at the Community Centre, 14 Anderson Lane, Thursday, Jan. 2, between 3 p.m. and 7 p.m.

To make an appointment, you may book directly at 1-888-236-6283 (1-888-2DONATE); or visit the Canadian Blood Services website at www.blood.ca.

For more information call 1-888-236-6283.

Points to note:

- Anyone with medical or travel questions, should call 1-888-236-6283 and speak to an RN before booking.
- Donors must be feeling well on donation day - no cold, sore throat, or flu symptoms, etc.
- Donors must bring photo ID to the Clinic.
- No tattoos or body piercing for six months prior to donating blood.
- Remember to eat and drink prior to donating.

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Dec 26: Closed	Dec 26: 11 am - 5 pm
Dec 27-30: Regular Hours	Dec 27-30: Regular Hours
Dec 31: 8:30 am - 5 pm	Dec 31: 9:30 am - 5 pm
Jan 1: Regular	Jan 1: Closed
Jan 2: Regular	Jan 2: Regular

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Christmas Greetings

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Alexander Aitken and Sophia Voigt, first-year members of the NOLA Air Cadets, prepare for the annual fundraising holiday bottle drive. Photo submitted

Cadets gear up for January bottle drive

Get rid of refundable bottles collected during the holiday

Penny Coles
Niagara Advance

Bottle drives are more than a fundraiser for the NOLA Air Cadets; they are a service to town residents.

The cadets hold two drives a year, the first Saturdays after New Year's Day and Labour Day.

Together they raise about \$8,000, providing a significant source of revenue, says sponsorship chair Ken Eden.

The money helps fund activities for about 30 cadets and helps pay for military staff who provide the training.

It also helps fund the flying opportunities the cadets love, he said.

"And judging by the response, I think people really find them helpful," says Eden.

Saturday, Jan. 4 cadets and drivers will be cruising the streets in town, including the Old Town, Garrison Village, Queenston and St. David's looking for boxes of refundable beer and alcohol bottles.

Put them out before 9 a.m. Saturday, either on a porch or in front of the garage not at the end of the driveway, where they are likely to be picked up by someone else.

"As long as we can see them, we'll pick them up," says Eden.

Cadets will be wearing their blue parkas, and trucks driven by parents and squadron leaders will be marked as well.

People with bottles they would like picked up ahead of time can call Tony Hendricks at 905-687-0278 or Ken Eden at 289-228-7271.

Bottles can also be dropped off at Van Noort Greenhouses at the corner of Hunter Rd. and Four Mile Creek Rd. between 9 a.m. and 3 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 4.

ADVANCE Notices

Community Calendar



GRACE UNITED CHURCH

222 Victoria Street,
Niagara on the Lake

Come Join Us for a
Family Christmas Eve Service
December 24th
at 4:00 p.m.

Christmas SERVICES 2013 (St. Mark's Anglican Church)

CHRISTMAS EVE

7:00PM
FAMILY CHORAL
EUCARIST SERVICE

CHRISTMAS EVE

10:00PM
LESSONS & CAROLS
CHORAL EUCARIST
SERVICE

CHRISTMAS DAY SERVICE

10:00AM
HOLY EUCARIST SERVICE
WITH GUEST MUSICIANS
Sunday, December 29th
8:30 am Holy Eucharist
10:30 am Choral Eucharist
www.stmarks1792.com



Christmas Eve Service

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Social here, with or without a border, colour,
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Deadline: Monday 5pm

Early Holiday Deadline:

Thursday December 19th ~ 3:00 pm

Call Anna at

905-468-3283 ext 102

St. Michael students see hard work pay off with science fair projects

School winners hope to go to regional science fair in March

Submitted by
Taryn Harle
and Maya Clattenburg
Grade 5 students

The Grade 5 and 7 students at St. Michael School participated in our annual



St. Michael
Catholic School
in the Classroom

Science Fair last week. There were 68 amazing and unique projects. The Grade 5 students spent their morning presenting their projects and the Grade 7s spent the afternoon presenting.

All the students had spent at least three months working on their projects, during school time and experimenting at home. On the big day all that hard work paid off. All the students did a phenomenal job. Some project topics

included: cancer killing food, heartbeat of horses, bacteria fighting gum, plant projects, and there was the classic volcano experiment.

The judges said they were impressed. Our volunteering judges were from our school community, former students, and NOTL Rotarians.

Winners will perhaps continue on to represent St. Michael at the Niagara Regional Science Fair, held the end of March.

In other school news, our Mathletes won for the third year in a row, at the Holy Cross family of schools competition. Our junior girls volleyball team played in their tournament and won second place overall, and our junior boys volley-

ball advanced to the semifinals in their tournament.

We continue to fundraise for help build a school in Kenya. The juniors and intermediates go skating on Thursdays, and then the intermediates will have their Christmas dance. This day is a red and green dress down day.

We have been celebrating Advent mass every week. We are celebrating the coming of the Baby Jesus' birth. This week we celebrate the third week which is Joy.

Our primary classes have been practising and practising for their Christmas concert. The gym and school were to be decorated with all the

Christmas-themed art. Parents, grandparents, friends and family, as well were invited to attend The True Meaning of Christmas.

Our primary students are all so talented with their beautiful singing and dancing. We thank all our primary teachers and Miss Kathy for all their efforts in putting on such a wonderful celebration.

Lastly, we wish everyone in our community a very merry Christmas, a safe holiday, and a happy New Year. See you in January.



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Grade 5 St. Michael student Maya Clattenburg invented a gel product to use on burgers to help promote healthy eating and decrease the chance of getting cancer.

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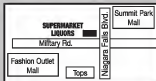


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Grade 5 St. Michael student Taryn Harie presents her Science Fair project about the vascular system of plants to volunteer judge and NOTL Rotarian Patrick MacNeil. Photo supplied

HOLIDAY WASTE MANAGEMENT SERVICES



HOLIDAY CHANGES IN WASTE COLLECTION

Garbage, recycling and Green Bin collection will be deferred by one day in the week following Christmas Day and New Year's Day.

HOLIDAY GARBAGE EXEMPTIONS

In the week following Christmas (Dec. 26, 27, 28, 30, 31), residents may place double their regular weekly garbage limit to the curb on their collection day.

CHRISTMAS TREE COLLECTION

- Saturday, Jan. 11, 2014 ONLY
- Christmas trees must be at the curb by 7 a.m.
- Remove all ornaments and decorations
- Christmas trees wrapped in plastic or buried in snow will not be collected. No artificial trees.

Regular Waste Collection Day	Changed to:
Monday (Dec. 23)	No change
Tuesday (Dec. 24)	No change
Wednesday (Dec. 25)	Thursday (Dec. 26)
Thursday (Dec. 26)	Friday (Dec. 27)
Friday (Dec. 27)	Saturday (Dec. 28)
Monday (Dec. 30)	No Change
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Visitors to Garrison Christmas learn about holiday during war years

Crafts, cooking and good cheer offered at Fort George event

Jennifer Chornley
Special to the Advance

With the wind blowing and fluffy snowflakes falling, the weather was perfect - setting the atmosphere for the Christmas Garrison-style event.

Fort George hosted its annual Garrison Christmas Saturday. Participants enjoyed period crafts, culinary treats, games, musket demonstrations and Christmas music.

In addition, kids were able to write Christmas cards to Canadian Forces personnel serving abroad.

"What better place is

there to explore Christmas past? Even the poorest soldiers celebrated Christmas, albeit very different from today's traditions," says Dan Laroche, Fort George Visitor Services Team Leader.

"In our celebration, visitors get to immerse themselves in a military-themed Christmas, enjoy crafts, blazing fires, and good cheer from 200 years ago."

Organizers of the Garrison Christmas held the event for many years at Navy Hall. Now that the Fort is open weekends from November until April, it was only fitting to continue the tradition where many of the area's historic events took place.

The Bowyer family from Hamilton enjoyed their experience. Diane Bowyer said it was a great opportunity to experience what

the soldiers went through during those times and a great way to spend time together as a family.

Laura Comfort from West Lincoln said she has always been fascinated with how Christmas was celebrated in earlier times.

"Such a contrast to today as Christmas is much more commercialized," she said, adding that the highlight of the tour was making the home-made crafts.

Weekend residents of Niagara-on-the-Lake, the Alberstatts had visited Fort George the week-end before. They watched the Christmas parade Saturday and

attended the Fort George Christmas festivities. For them, it was a great way to learn about the community's historic background and the experiences the soldiers went through during that time.

Maureen Hayslip has

been a volunteer with Fort George for almost three years. "My daughter is part of the Fife and Drum Corps so I decided to volunteer."

Hayslip provided the cooking demonstrations in the period kitchen. Made in the kitchen were

hot chocolate, gingersnaps and apple pandowdy, similar to an apple crisp.

"It's fun. I really enjoy showing visitors that cooking today really isn't that much different. Cooking overall hasn't changed, just the prep work."



Fort George volunteer Maureen Hayslip demonstrates cooking techniques and equipment used during the Garrison era to visitors at the Garrison Christmas at Fort George Saturday. Photo by Jennifer Chornley

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Sports

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Wallbangers include several father/son players

Ross Robinson
Special to the Advance

While most NOTLers were still fast asleep Sunday morning, a record 33 hockey players put on their equip-

ment and sweaters for an important clash at Meridian Credit Union Arena. There were exactly zero spectators in the rink, which is a pity because slow motion hockey is easier to follow than the game played by younger

and better players.

At the 11-game mark of this 26th Wallbanger season, Hanson's Habs had won one more game than Moore's Maple Leafs.

An inspiring dressing room talk by Blue Team leader Bill Dickson, exhorting his teammates to play hard from the first drop of the puck, had the desired effect.

After 54 minutes of the 70 minute game (straight time, with play stopping only after a goal) his team was comfortably ahead 6-2.

But then the wheels fell off. The Red Team scored twice within one minute, with a bullet from the point by Pete Vanderperk and a rebound stuffed in by Marcel Lounsbury.

Ever the competitor, Dickson walked on the Blue bench, "Come on guys, we're gonna blow this lead." Or words to that effect.

Moore's got the message,

tightened up on defence, fore-checked tenaciously, and won the game 6-4. Netminder Bernie Bevons was full value for the win.

This tied the season series at five wins apiece and one tie.

A very strong and gutsy effort was put in, albeit in a losing cause, by Red Team winger Vic Tee. He showed no fatigue, even after walking 2 km, along the Christmas Parade route the previous day, handing out candy canes on behalf of the St. Davids Lions Club.

This record-breaking Wallbangers game featured seven father and son pair-

ings. Ray and Jeff Jackson, Dave and Mark Shantz and Larry and Jake Hildebrandt played for the winning Moore's Leafs.

The second place Hanson's Habs included Carl and Ben Glauser, Dan and Sean Tebbutt, Vic Tee and Chris Knox and Terry Mactaggart's husband Terry Mactaggart and son Andrew.

One fairly exciting moment near the middle of the game saw Ray Jackson thread a deft pass to his son Jeff who then went end-to-end before showing his unique heel point spinerna move while deking Red

netminder Kevin Roach.

Again, no penalties were called on either team. This is because all 33 players respect the game, and also because the Wallbangers don't use a referee.

Having said that, as the final buzzer sounded, two players were exchanging cross words in the corner. This time, we will not mention the names of the two hotheads, but if this happens again, they will be ousted.

Once more, lots of fun, lots of camaraderie, all followed by the traditional post-game breakfast at Silk's Country Kitchen.



On the ice Sunday at Wallbangers hockey game in Virgil were Sean and Dan Tebbutt, Jake and Larry Hildebrandt and Mark and Dave Shantz. Other father/son pairings were already in the dressing rooms. Photo supplied

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Thank-you from Noreen and Charlie Parsons at Halley's Haberdashery

Thank-you from Noreen and Charlie Parsons at Halley's Haberdashery. It is with both sadness and excitement that we come to say goodbye to all our friends and customers at Halley's Haberdashery. Twenty-three years ago we took a risk and opened our store on Queen Street. As we look back, we both feel so grateful for the opportunity that this venture provided us. We would like to pay tribute to all our friends and customers near and far who supported us. We leave with many warm and wonderful memories of shared conversations, stories and laughter. Sincere thanks to the special people who worked with us from the beginning and shared our commitment to excellent customer service. We are so grateful for all the support and encouragement that you so readily gave. Your kindness will always be remembered. As we step down from the "helm" we would like to introduce to you, Peter Earle. It is with great confidence that we know Peter will develop his own vision and continue to serve you with excellence. In closing, we would like to wish you the very best in 2014. We'll miss you and, and thanks for the memories!

Noreen and Charlie Parsons

A Pleasure and a Responsibility

I am looking forward to my involvement in what has become a special part of the Niagara-on-the-Lake experience. I appreciate what Halley's stands for and the value it brings to customers and community alike. Everyone who knows Charlie and Noreen Parsons recognizes that they are very "special." We have become friends, and I thank them for sharing their wonderful legacy that is Halley's Haberdashery. I am excited with the opportunity to continue the tradition of serving customers with excellence, and working closely with suppliers for many years to come. See you at Halley's!

Peter Earle

Avery Royer, Kyra Marotta and Marin McLaughlin of the NOTL Skating Club competed in the John McKay Memorial Invitational held in Tillsonburg. Marin placed first in the finals of Level 2 Development, Avery placed fifth in the final of Level 2 and Kyra Marotta placed sixth in Level 3. They are competing to earn a spot on the Western Ontario Development select team of skaters who are chosen through a process that includes collect points for placing and evaluations. Registration for the winter Learn to Skate programs will be held Saturday, Dec 21 from 3 to 6 p.m. in the Meridian Credit Union Arena lobby.



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Novice boys come up short

Rangers start off strong with a win but lose next two

The Rangers novice boys entered the CYO tournament last weekend and started out with a convincing win against the Pelham Panthers 48-27.

Lukas Klassen led all scorers with 22 points while Carter Stoutenburg added six, and Lucca Valvano added eight.

Stoutenburg and Cameron Moss pulled down some great rebounds while Carter Morency, Kolby Gossen and Jack MacNamara added some tenacious defense.

The Rangers, sponsored by Bridman and Durksen, then

took on the Stoney Creek NYB and lost a nail-biter 26-25.

Klassen led the scoring with 11 points while Stoutenburg added four and Moss, Dylan Macdonald, Aiden Laun and Ethan Carriere contributed with a pair each.

Valvano, Macdonald and Laun worked hard on defence and kept the storm on there toes.

The Rangers completed their final game of the weekend coming up short to the Toronto Triple Threat 45-26, who ended up winning the tournament.

The Rangers showed great improvement from their previous games and look forward to seeing these teams again.



NOTL's pee-wee travel team held its second annual Christmas food drive last week, collecting 335 lbs of non-perishable food items that were donated to the Project SHARE Food Bank.

The boys also had a good week on the ice, with Brock University's men's hockey team and support staff running a high-tempo skill-based practice for the team to thank them.

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Sunday, December 22nd
10:30 am Worship
Message: Starstruck
Pastor Rick Miles
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905-468-5731
Sunday, December 22nd
Sunday School for all ages 9:45 am
Worship Service 10:40 am
Message by Pastor Don Evans
Jesus is the Light
Children provided during service
Christmas Eve Service 7 pm - Follow The Light

Sunday, December 22nd
10:00am Coffee Time & 10:30am
Worship Service
Village Kids (ages 1 - grade 5)
He Will Be Called..... Prince of Peace
Pastor Greg Alderton
www.villagebiblechurch.ca

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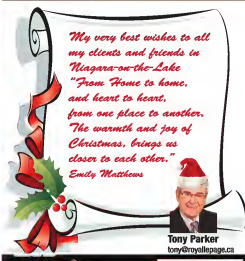
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 Wed. Dec. 25th (Christmas Day) - **No Service**
 Thur. Dec. 26th (Boxing Day) - **No Service**
 Fri. Dec. 27th - Regular Service
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 Mon. Dec. 30th - Regular Service
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For more information call (905) 468-3266

**December 26, 2013 Deadline**

Retail advertising is
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Obituaries

Obituaries

In Memoriams

In Memoriams



JANUS, Dieter R.F.C. - 1934 - 2013
 Passed away suddenly at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital in Bridgetown, Barbados on Saturday, December 7, 2013. Born in Hamburg, Germany, he emigrated to Canada in the late 50's with a degree and a passion for business and agriculture. From Fin Flon, Manitoba to Montreal to Winnipeg, he initially invested his considerable energy in the business machines sector and agricultural real estate. Always active, he helped found the Gimli Yacht Club and became one of the sailors to beat in club and provincial regattas. In 1984, Dieter and his wife moved to their dream farm just outside Niagara-on-the-Lake, where he introduced a novel growing technique for fruit trees, garnering attention from universities from Asia, USA and Canada, bringing bus loads to his small farm. In 1993, he helped found the NOTL Rotary Club, became its Charter president and was recognized for his contributions as a Paul Harris Fellow. This club raises funds for many critical programs including the Gift of Life program which brings children from Third World countries to North America for heart surgeries. In his retirement, he enjoyed his friends at the NOTL Sailing Club and at his second home in beautiful Barbados. Dieter will be missed by the love of his life, Herdith, his daughters, Christine and Karen and his grandchildren, Laurence, Mark, Geoffrey, Jack and Jenna, and the countless friends who enjoyed his irreverent humour, insightful storytelling and playful spirit. Services will be held in Barbados on December 18, 2013, and his ashes will be interred in a private family cemetery in Niagara at a later date. In lieu of flowers, the family would appreciate Memorial donations to The Niagara-on-the-Lake Rotary Club Foundation P.O. Box 1232, Niagara-on-the-Lake, ON, L0S 1J0, in his name, so that his Rotary Club might continue the good work he helped launch years ago.



VAN EGMOND, Michael Gerald -
 In loving memory of a dear son, fiancé, brother, uncle and friend who passed away December 20, 2010.

*The years may wipe out many things,
 But this they'll wipe out never;
 The memory of those happy days,
 When we were all together,
 We think of him in silence,
 His name we oft recall,
 But there is nothing left to answer,
 But his picture on the wall,
 Just when his life was brightest,
 Just when his hopes were best,
 God called him from among us,
 To a home of eternal rest.*

Sadly missed, Forever loved, Mom and Dad (Jerry and Connie), Linda, Jeffrey and Christy, Robert and Tina, Samuel, Emma, Adam and David and Adeline.

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 In Loving Memory of our dear father
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 December 25, 1984

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